

**FAMOUS COMPANIES**

**Military Organizations Known the World Over.**

**ONE ENGLISH, TWO AMERICAN**

**Curious Beginnings of Our Militia Soldiers—The Old Guard of New York Composed Entirely of Distinguished Men.**

NEW YORK, Jan. 18.—On many of the parchment rolls in archives of the Honourable Artillery Company of London, there stands among the list of members of this most ancient organization of its kind the single name "George." Yet for all the quaint simplicity of the name, "George" was the Captain General of the company, afterward King George II of England. It was indeed largely through the military training which he received at the Artillery Garden that "George" was enabled to win the war of the Austrian Succession.

But "George" was not the only king or history maker enrolled in this ancient artillery company. Then, as now, independent companies maintained by their members and apart from the regular army though serving with it when opportunity offered played an important part in the military organization. Corresponding to what in this country is now the national guard, or organizations of veterans, the annals of history show

in maintaining order in London when the regular army was on the Continent. The aged George III frequently reviewed the corps. 1816 and 1819 the company was active in quelling the trouble arising from the high taxes resulting from the wars with the "Little Corporal."

Latterly the company has been called upon to uphold the military glory of the nation by effective parades whenever a foreign potentate visited London. In the Boer War, out of an available strength of 600 men, 500 members volunteered. Such is the record of the oldest organization of its kind in existence, extending over nearly four centuries.

In the new world the organizations most nearly resembling the Honourable Artillery Company of London are the Old Guard of the City of New York, and the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, or as it is more familiarly known, of Boston. While the latter is much older it is not so typically American as New York's Old Guard.

Organized in 1638 the original charter of the Massachusetts organization was signed by Governor John Winthrop and Deputy Thomas Dudley and is still preserved. It empowered certain specified persons to constitute themselves "the Military Company of Massachusetts." Their uniform of buff coats, leather jackets protected with steel plates, and a helmet with a scarlet plume was brighter than would naturally be expected in a Puritan community.

The years of special prosperity for the company began with the ascension of King William, and at that time if a town meeting chanced to be appointed for a drill day it could not be legally held. Three of the justices of the Supreme Court were artillery men and Chief Justice Sewall mentions that the Court adjourned on account of the Artillery. From the members of this organization came nine of the "Mohawks"

from the Old Guard of Napoleon which "died but never surrendered." It is the oldest veteran organization of its kind in the state if not in the country.

The genesis of the organization is interesting. Previous to 1825 the only public military spectacles in New York, already giving promise of becoming the metropolis of the New World, were the annual drills of irregular militia or the parade of an occasional regiment. But in the whole city there was not a well drilled and disciplined battalion or company. There were, to be sure, one or two brigades of uniformed troops, but New Yorkers had not yet begun to take pride in this branch of military activity.

It was in the summer of 1825 that there arrived in New York from Boston a sailing vessel bearing a company, fully uniformed and fitted out with camp equipage. After landing and pitching their tents they gave an exhibition drill in City Hall park by word of command and by bugle. This drill immediately attracted the attention and aroused the enthusiasm of not only the city officials but the public in general, and in it was found the inception of the present day Old Guard. For years its development was identified with that of various organizations, such for example as the Tompkins Blues, the City Guard, and the Light Guard, until in 1868 it was finally incorporated under the name by which it is known today, the Old Guard of the City of New York.

While the history of the Honourable Artillery Company of London is largely concerned with wars, history records comparatively few in which the Boston organization or the Old Guard had chance to participate as organizations, though the ranks of the latter are recruited from veterans of many wars. But whenever in the four-score years of its history war did come, the Old Guard of New York, like the Old Guard of Napoleon, and in this country the An-

garden, its attendance ran as high as 17,000—a stupendous military spectacle. But the growing cosmopolitan of New York has necessitated a change, and this year the ball instead of being held in the Madison Square Garden will be given in the Waldorf Astoria, and the invitations instead of reaching almost 20,000 will be absolutely limited to 1500 and those carefully distributed. Like everything else nowadays this greatest of military balls is becoming more and more exclusive.

But in the annals of war, and in the annals of peace in which a preparedness for war is the greatest watchword, the organizations apart from the regular army are still a mighty force. What the Honourable Artillery Company is to England, the Ancient and Honorables of Boston and the Old Guard of the City of New York are to this country, and each in its sphere has served as an impetus to the maintenance of that great army of peace which as our Spanish war showed is still one of the staunchest bulwarks in war. Out of the profane sneer of General Blount in 1825 has come the backbone of America's peace army and war army too, the militia and the national guard. Back of all historically stand prominently two organizations, the Ancient and Honorables of Boston, and, in its coalescence of New York's disorganized militia at the beginning of the last century, the Old Guard of the City of New York, neither of which from the American standpoint has any reason to blush when its records are compared with the older and similarly constituted Honourable Artillery Company of London.

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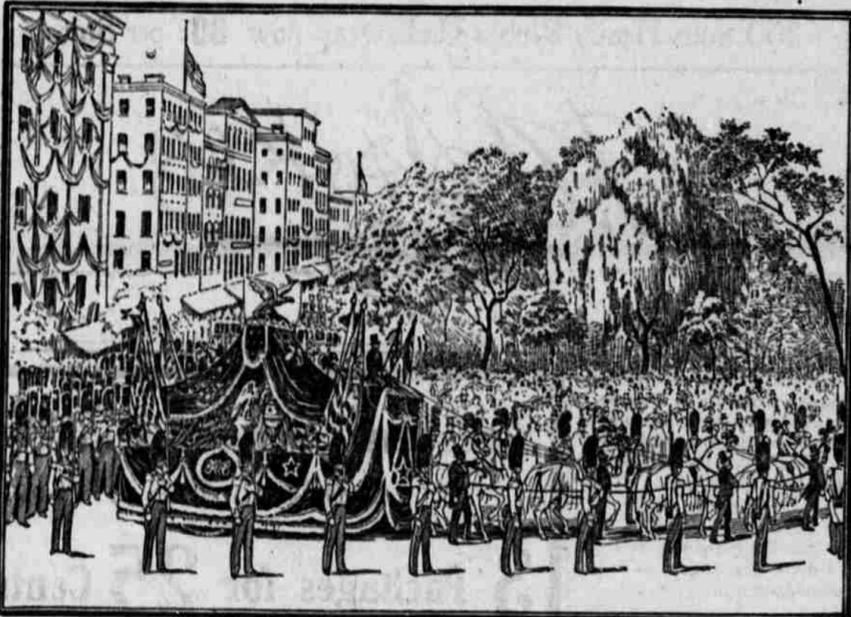
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conspicuously the part played by these organizations.

Of all as they exist today the Honourable Artillery Company of London is the oldest. By royal decree, sealed with the "Grate Seal" of England, the Fraternity of Saint George, or the Artillery Guild, now known as the Honourable Artillery Company, was duly incorporated in 1537, or 370 years ago, only a third of a century after Columbus discovered America. The company served in various engagements during the reign of Queen Bess but during the first years of the reign of James it seemed likely to die out. About 1615, however, it became popular, as the records have it, with "the better sort of citizens of the best means and quality" who had to be certified to as well to do and well affected toward religion by his majesty and another democratic touch in keeping with "George"—by the board of Aldermen. Never since then has the permanency of the organization been in doubt. At that time, when the company assembled to drill "after the modern and best fashion" the Prince of Wales, afterward Charles I, was a regular attendant.

Another Prince of Wales, who later became Charles II, was formally enrolled in the company in 1641, together with two other scions of the royal family. Under Cromwell the company was active; under Charles II it was looked upon with some distrust at court, and under James II it was still more frankly in royal disrepute. When George I made his public entry in 1714, however, the company was restored to high favor, receiving from the new monarch 500 pounds as a mark of his approval.

Through the eighteenth century this organization continued its drills, parades and banquets. Many famous professional soldiers graduated from its ranks. During the Napoleonic wars the Honourable Artillery played an important part

who in 1773 spilled the tea into Boston harbor. It goes without saying that the company served through the War of Independence.

When the first militia law was framed for the United States, General Lincoln went to Mount Vernon to advocate it to Washington. At a little meeting he presented his point and instanced the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Boston as the kind of Association which every city should have. General Blount of North Carolina asked with a sneer "Marry, who in hell commands this Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company?" "Your very humble servant," was Lincoln's reply. Thereupon the introduction into the constitution of a provision for militia was assured. Since that time the activities of the company have been various and honorable, features of its existence now being its annual feasts, parades, and acting as escorts to distinguished visitors. Its relations with the Honourable Artillery Company of London are cordial and close, thus linking together kindred organizations in the Old and New Worlds.

The Old Guard of the City of New York, while of less ancient origin than either of the other two companies, is unique in this particular—that it is made up entirely of veterans who have seen active service. Democracy equally with distinction is a watchword in this organization, in whose ranks dozens of general and field officers have served and are serving daily.

Although not formally incorporated until 1868, the Old Guard in its component parts dates back to 1826, or well on toward a century. Its formation marked the first coalescence and final permanency of various troops which were identified with the early history of the city. As its name implies it was modelled after, and its uniforms, together with the bearskin shako, copied

and Honourable Artillery Company of Boston, has maintained an honorable record.

Since the Spanish war, for which the Old Guard recruited a regiment of some 3000 members, its ways have run in the paths of peace. But even in bygone decades its brightest manoeuvres have not always been in connection with war. At every military pageant and celebration it has been to the fore, as for instance in the unveiling of the Sherman monument when it acted as escort to General Miles during the visit of Princess Eulalie whose guard of honor it was, and in scores of similar cases. Its veterans have acted, too, as escort in some of the greatest funerals over which New York has grieved, such for instance as that of Henry Clay and that of General Robert Anderson, the hero of Fort Sumpter. Even in the long stretches of peace its drills and preparations in cases of need continue but its greatest events in the light of public notice, like those of the Ancient and Honorables of Boston, have come to be those of peace.

Two well known annual happenings of the Old Guard since war last shook the country are its sad and impressive memorial services, occurring on its anniversary day in April each year, with the memory-stirring call of the roll of the Old Guard's dead, and, in contrast, its annual ball. In the former there is a glorious roll in memory of whom the drums are muffled and taps blown every year. In contrast the annual ball has come to be the greatest military event of its kind in the country by reason of the attendance of many of the foremost men of distinction of the nation and by a long array of prominent guests, including governors, foreign ambassadors and prominent military organizations. In the past, when this greatest of military balls was held in the Metropolitan Opera House or the Madison Square

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